The supply of individual life in the universe can never possibly exceed the demand.
—WILLIAM JAMES

THEOSOPHY

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DYNAMICS AND DOCTRINES

THE self-knowledge sought by students of Theosophy is at once the most elusive and the most inescapable of objects in human life. It is elusive in that, through the making of definitions, we learn that the stuff of final meaning inevitably slips out of any definition the mind can formulate, and inescapable in that an idea of the self inevitably participates in every conclusion we draw and act upon.

A period of history, you could say, amounts to a time when certain broad compromises for the resolution of this paradox are adopted by those who more or less agree upon what is "knowledge" and what is not. By this agreement, the people of the period believe that they understand one another and are able, therefore, to create a body of literature which is based upon common assumptions.

A period of history approaches its end when the thinkers and writers to whom people give attention begin to doubt the assumptions of their age, and to propose other ways of looking at man and his experience.

There are basically two ways in which this may happen. One way—which is most familiar to us—results in the transfer of men's ideas about themselves and the world from one set of definable assumptions to another. For example, there was the passage from theological definitions to scientific descriptions of self and "reality" which took place between the seventeenth and the twentieth centuries. These changes in definitions, from one point of view, had

far-reaching consequences in human behavior. They certainly affected the way in which men spent their energies, and affected even more how they explained to themselves and others what they did. There is a great difference between thinking of one's self as having a soul that may be "saved" through a carefully described course of belief and practice, and thinking of one's self as a physical organism produced by blind forces of evolution. These two views of man may and do lead to obviously opposed political doctrines and to widely varying conceptions of human good. Even if the perceptive historian is able to show that, beneath the alterations of idea and outlook, the behavior of men in their everyday lives exhibits many constant factors, there can be no doubt that differences in thought make for differences in action.

The other way in which the changes involved in the birth of a new epoch may take place is illustrated by the work of a great reformer and teacher such as H. P. Blavatsky. She did not simply offer "replacements" for the ideas which needed to be discarded, but gave, instead, *an account of the dynamics of such changes.*

Had H.P.B. been only a "reformer," she would have provided better ideas to take place of poorer ideas, and her work would have been done. But she was also a *teacher.* She said, for example, that the teachings which she transmitted could, for those with sufficient perceptive power, be recorded on "a few pages of geometrical signs and glyphs." Now what does this mean for the reader of *The Secret Doctrine?* It means that the verbal forms there presented, and in some degree the underlying conceptual meanings, would eventually give way to other, clearer communications, appropriate to greater manasic development on the part of humanity. This in no way diminishes the importance or the validity of her books for the contemporary reader, but gives them an inextinguishable *philosophical* character. What H.P.B. says about self-knowledge—or the "evolution of the God-idea"—is a rule of all authentic philosophic inquiry and teaching. In one place she puts it thus:

> Nothing is permanent except the one hidden absolute existence which contains in itself the noumena of all realities. The existences belonging to every plane of being, up to the highest Dhyan-Chohans, are, in degree, of the nature of shadows cast by a magic lantern on a colourless screen; but all things are relatively real, for the cogniser is also a reflection, and the things cognized are therefore as real to him as himself. Whatever reality things possess must be looked for in them before or after they

> have passed like a flash through the material world; but we cannot cognise any such existence directly, so long as we have sense-instruments which bring only material existence into the field of our consciousness. Whatever plane our consciousness may be acting in, both we and the things belonging to that plane are, for the time being, our only realities. As we rise in the scale of development we perceive that during the stages through which we have passed we mistook shadows for realities, and the upward progress of the Ego is a series of progressive awakenings, each advance bringing with it the idea that now, at last, we have reached "reality"; but only when we shall have reached the absolute Consciousness, and blended our own with it, shall we be free from the delusions produced by Maya.

When Madame Blavatsky writes instructively concerning the past of our history and planet, she embodies her teaching in doctrine and expresses the doctrine in the vocabulary of our time. She warns against the inadequacy of our language—which she must use—and states the doctrines as clearly as she can. These doctrines are a temporary substitute for knowledge, or rather, they are tools, and an invitation to *seek* knowledge, so that the doctrines may be replaced by first-hand perception. The doctrines of the Wisdom Religion become "religious," or "traditional," when there is no longer an effort made to convert them into direct perception. How is this tendency of human nature to be avoided? For Theosophists, by determined attention to those statements by H.P.B. which are *not* doctrinal in this sense—which deal with the dynamics of self-discovery instead of with the "facts" of self-discovery. There is a sense in which the dynamics are timeless, since they are principles instead of signposts or particular fruits of growth within a given cycle of search.

It is H.P.B.'s primary emphasis on the dynamics of learning truth that reveals her stature as a teacher. Only this emphasis can provide the inquirer with a method of study which is self-corrective of the delusions of final certainty.

Any age which is capable of seeing the importance of this method, as distinguished from the importance of better or "improved" ideas about life and nature, is an age which can properly be called "philosophical." It has in it the principle of mastery over the limitations of cycles. Since it is an "age," it is characterized as a cycle, and the people of the time will have their experience in terms of cycles, but they come to realize that this experience might be differently seen, differently explained, differently valued, in other circumstances.

This is the sort of an age H.P.B. sought to begin by her coming and by her instruction of students of Theosophy. No other achievement can bring to harvest the seed she planted in the world.

To accept H.P.B. as teacher is to accept this principle of self-reliant transcendence of all authorities which claim finality for doctrine, and to accept, also, the doctrines such a teacher does propose, in their character of stepping-stones to the relative knowledge that is appropriate and possible during the cycle in which they are taught.

PHILOSOPHICAL PSYCHOLOGY

Among the philosophers, Spinoza, the father of modern dynamic psychology, postulated the picture of the nature of man in terms of a "model of human nature," which was ascertainable and definable and from which the laws of human behavior and reaction followed. Man, and not just men of this or of that culture, could be understood like any other being in nature because man is one, and the same laws are valid for all of us at all times. The philosophers of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries (especially Goethe and Herder) believed that the humanity (*Humanitaet*) inherent in man leads him to ever higher stages of development; they believed that every individual carries within himself not only his individuality but also all of humanity with all its potentialities. They considered the task of life to be the development toward totality through individuality; and they believed that the voice of humanity was given to everybody and could be understood by every human being.

—ERICH FROMM

MISUNDERSTOOD BIBLICAL TRADITIONS

MIRACLES—I

STUDY of history, both religious and secular, reveals the fact that *miracles,* so-called, have been known and produced in all ages and by all peoples—from the primeval tribes of Paleolithic times (as intimated by cave paintings) to nations of the present day. The history of magic embraces the lives of the Bushmen of South Africa, the Indians of both North and South America, as well as the almost numberless tribes and sects of India, China, Egypt and Greece. Whether one searches the Holy Writ of the world's religious lore or the literature of Gnostic and Neo-platonic philosophy, the secret documents of mediaeval Alchemy and Kabalism or the more recent teachings of Spiritualism, there is one long story of "magic," in one or another phase of its operation, of the good or evil, conscious or unconscious, exercise of the extraordinary powers of the human mind. Even the Bible teems with allusions to enchantments, sorcery, dreams, prophecy, and clairvoyance.

To the average religious devotee, born and bred under the Judeo-Christian tradition, there used to be little doubt as to the *bona fides* of the "signs," "wonders," and "mighty deeds" recorded in the pages of both Old and New Testaments. Who among the truly faithful, for example, ever questioned the story of the parting of the Red Sea, so as to let the Israelites pass, or of Aaron's magic rod turning into a serpent? Who had the temerity to doubt the statement made in Joshua that the sun and moon were stayed in their courses for the period of a day, or that Elisha caused an iron axe to float upon the water? Who asked for an explanation of the mighty deeds attributed to Jesus—the raising of Lazarus from the dead, the healing of the blind, walking upon the water, and the feeding of thousands of people on five loaves and two fishes? Such questionings could only bring a demand for the strengthening of one's faith.

So accustomed are we to thinking of the "signs" and "wonders" of the Bible as things "past finding out," that we are not inclined, as a

rule, to consider the possibility that some of these phenomena may have a perfectly natural explanation—even within range of present understanding. So fixed have we become in the belief that there are "good" miracles, divinely inspired, and "bad" ones, the work of Satan, that we have taken neither time nor interest to look into the relationship between the two.

In the so-called "savage" cultures, where life is little influenced by materialism, powers over nature are held by the people to be natural attributes of the medicine-man or *shaman.* Rain-making and the tempering of storms, altering the course of human events, healing, the exorcism of evil spirits, and even the raising of the "dead," are feats of common occurrence. In the history of the higher religious cultures, the range of magical display is enormous: causing the sun to stand still, the drying up of rivers, control over the weather, power over space and time, imperviousness to fire and water, change of sex, levitation, penetrating stone walls, lengthening beams of wood, and the multiplying of food. Inanimate objects, such as statues, were often said to move as if alive. Diseases were cured both through use of herbs and with magic potions, or by the laying on of hands. Visions of distant events were seen clairvoyantly and foretold, and the thoughts of men were an open book to the initiated.

Few Western readers, it would seem, have any conception of the vast variety of "miracles" recorded in the writings of oriental religious philosophy. How many know the story, for example, of the miraculous virgin birth of Gautama Buddha, founder and propagator of one of the world's most sublime systems of religious thought? Queen Maya, Gautama's mother, as sensitively reported in *The Light of Asia,* "dreamed that a Star from heaven, splendid, six-rayed, in color rosy-pearl, whereof the token was an Elephant, six-tusked, and white as milk of Kamaduk, shot through the void; and, shining into her, entered her womb from the right. Awakened, bliss beyond mortal mother's filled her breast, and over half the earth a lovely light forewent the morn. The strong hills shook; the waves sank lulled; and flowers that bloom by day came forth as 'twere high noon . . . and a wind blew with unknown freshness over lands and seas."

After the child was born and placed in a palanquin for the journey home, the Four Regents of Heaven are said to have descended in order to pay homage, much as the Three Wise Men of the East, see-

ing the Star of Bethlehem, travelled great distances to offer gifts to Jesus. The Regents of the North, South, East and West, it is said, took the poles of the palanquin, "in caste and outward garb like bearers, yet most mighty gods; and gods walked free with men that day, though men knew not: for Heaven was filled with gladness for Earth's sake, knowing Lord Buddha thus was come again."

It was through discipline and saintliness that the pupils of Lao-tse were said to have become one with Tao, or God, wherein control over the recondite laws of Nature was gained. Through concentration, meditation, and the training of Will, Buddha's *arhats* (disciples) were supposed to have developed and perfected their manasic or magical powers—the five transcendental virtues, as they were called—and were thus enabled to perform miracles. Although extraordinary feats of magic are attributed to both Lao-tse and Buddha, neither placed great value upon the phenomenal. If any of Buddha's *arhats,* for example, were seen or known to have gained their almsbowl of food through display of magic, the Master immediately ordered the bowl broken. When one of the *arhats* flew through the air, Buddha is reported to have rebuked him sternly, saying: "This will not conduce to the conversion of the unconverted, but rather to those who have not been converted remaining unconverted, and to the turning back of those who have been converted . . . There is no path through the air. A man is not a *samana* by outward acts."

Fearless and open-minded Christians and Jews, of whom there are an ever-increasing number these days, might do well to reassess the whole subject of *miracles* as recorded in the Old and New Testaments, and compare their findings with the teachings of other faiths. If this is done, it will probably be discovered that there is little distinction to be made among such wonders, of whatever land. Some may even be led to question, as one Christian was, why the miracles reported in oriental scriptures seem to display little of the aggressiveness and ruthlessness found in Old Testament magic—such as the ten plagues, for example, and the event at Mt. Carmel where Elijah is said to have slain the four hundred and fifty prophets of Baal. It is reported that on this "holy" occasion, after the God of Israel had demonstrated through Elijah his superiority over Baal:

> Elijah said unto them, Take the prophets of Baal; let not one of them escape. And they took them: and Elijah brought them down to the brook Ki-shon and slew them there. (1 Kings 18. 40.)

Sectarians usually dislike having this and similar demonstrations of miracle (or shall we call it *black magic?*) brought to their attention. Few possess the courage, it would seem, to evaluate the Bible on its own inherent worth, and thus to view Elijah's deed in the light of common human mercy, to say nothing of its appearance in the light of the fifth of the ten Commandments: *Thou shalt not kill.*

What are miracles? Are they *super-natural* phenomena outside the rule of Law, and possible only through intervention from God or Satan? Or are they works of man? Are miracles the same as magic? Is there a science of Occultism that may be studied and learned, and through a knowledge of which extraordinary phenomena may be produced? Whatever the answers to these questions, honest enquirers will find it difficult to ignore the fact that every religious system worthy of the name has had its *esoteric,* or secret teaching, and its *exoteric,* or outward public worship.

If there were no schools of Occultism and no science of Magic in early biblical days, how explain the statement in Acts 7: 22 that "Moses was learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians, and was mighty in words and in deeds?"

Buddha's system has always been divided into two parts, and is so to this day: the *Mahayana* or esoteric school, the "greater" vehicle, and the *Hinayana,* or exoteric school, the "lesser." Pythagoras referred to his *Gnosis* as "the knowledge of the things that are," and this greater knowledge he reserved for his pledged disciples. The initiated Egyptian Priests, or Hierophants, are known to have guarded with care the knowledge of occult alphabets and secret ciphers of the hieratic writings, through use of which, in correlation with color and sound, they made contact with the invisible worlds. The old Jewish Rabbis spoke of their outward public teaching as the *Mercavah,* "the vehicle," which they said was but *the covering which contains the hidden soul—i.e.,* their highest secret knowledge, the latter being kept in the hands of teachers of the Secret Mysteries. And is it not a well known fact, a truth easily proven by reference to any good dictionary or encyclopedia, that the celebrated solemnities of the Eleusinian and Samothracian Mysteries of ancient Greece were enacted in two parts—the "lesser Mysteries" for the *mystae* (those who see as through a veil), and the "greater Mysteries" for the *epoptae* (who see things unveiled)? And did not Jesus, also, have his two teachings—one for the "disciples" and the other for the "multitudes"?

> And the disciples came, and said unto him, Why speakest thou unto them [the multitudes] in parables?
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> He answered and said unto them, Because it is given unto you [the disciples] to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it is not given.
>
> I speak to them in parables: because they seeing see not; and hearing they hear not, neither do they understand.
>
> But blessed *are* your eyes, for they see: and your ears, for they hear. . . .
>
> For verily I say unto you, That many prophets and righteous men have desired to see those things which ye see, and have not seen them; and to hear those things which ye hear, and have not heard them. (Matt. 13. 10-17.)

What "the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven" were, which the disciples heard and saw, but which the multitudes could not see—we are not informed. Nor are we told what were "those things" which the disciples beheld that not even prophets and righteous men could behold.

Both the materialistic scientist and the mystically-inclined theosophist look with considerable distaste upon the technological term *miracle*. Especially is this so when the term is used to denote those uncommon occurrences which are held to be outside the realm of "established order" and "possible only by the intervention of divine power," as defined in some dictionaries. Theosophical philosophy accords with Science in the view that the Universe is governed by Law, and that no event or experience, however strange or even supernatural it may appear, can take place without an efficient and precedent Cause. But beyond this, the path of the two Sciences is likely to divide. For Theosophy, unlike Materialism, recognizes Forces and Powers beyond the physical—forces spiritual and occult, whose operations are transcendental, and whose effects, although perfectly natural and according to Law, may sometimes appear to be as "miraculous" and "unexplainable" as any member of religious sectarianism could desire. It is a fundamental principle in theosophical philosophy that—

> There is no miracle. Everything that happens is the result of law—eternal, immutable, ever active. Apparent miracle is but the operation of forces antagonistic to what Dr. W. B. Carpenter, F.R.S.—a man of great learning but little knowledge—calls "the well-ascertained laws of nature." Like many of his class, Dr. Carpenter ignores the fact that there may be laws once "known," now unknown to science. (H. P. Blavatsky.)

In spite of his apparent iconoclasm and persistently questioning mind, the Theosophist, then, is friend and ally of every truly religious man, who feels intuitively that there is more to life than appears on the surface or that can be accounted for by materialism. There are "wonders" beyond imagination on this old earth of ours —wonders terrible and grand, exceeding by far any of the "works" and "mighty deeds" recorded in the Bible. Only, to the Theosophist, they are not *miracles*—but feats, rather, of a vast and mighty science —the majestic science of Magic. To the student of esoteric philosophy, it does not seem logical to believe, as many religious devotees apparently do, that Moses, Aaron, Jesus, Lao-tse, and Buddha, together with a host of early Christian and mediaeval magicians, all put aside the laws of nature in the production of their "wonders." The Theosophist suggests that these Wise Men were not *breakers* of Nature's Laws, but only knew more about them than is known today, and put those higher forces to work.

Ever since the third and fourth centuries of our era, when Eusebius, bishop of Caesarea, took upon himself the task of editing other men's philosophies, both Christian and Pagan, theological Christianity seems to have adopted an unbelievably low estimate of the human being. From that period, man has been conceived to be a "poor miserable sinner," incapable of reaching great heights of knowledge and nobility. Enough of the New Testament teaching remains, however, to indicate that this was not the view held by all. St. Paul looked upon man as being *dual* in nature—possessing both godlike and demoniacal dispositions—and so did Zoroaster, Krishna, and Buddha. What did Paul mean when he states (1 Cor. 15: 47) that "The first man is of the earth, earthy; the second is the Lord from heaven?" Could he have meant to imply, as do the Theosophists of this day, that the "first man," the lower, is but the mortal body or vehicle of the second, "the Lord from heaven"—the latter being the immortal Higher Ego which incarnates from life to life? Failing to admit the twofold nature of mind, theology finds itself in the unenviable position of making Deity an accessory of all those acts of ruthlessness mentioned in the Old Testament.

But in a study of this kind, the twofold nature of man, as given in the Bible, is not to be thus put aside. There is no proposition in the whole field of research more susceptible of proof than the proposition that the entire manifested universe is pervaded by an inescapable *law of duality*—good and evil, light and darkness, pleasure and

pain, etc. And if daily experience and reflection have taught us anything, it seems to be that the line of demarcation between these "opposites" is very thin, indeed! High and low, inner and outer, and hot and cold, are not separate and distinct, but are opposite sides of a single coin. The pharmacist who compounds remedies prescribed to heal does not use laws different from those employed by the insecticide chemist, whose concoctions are meant to kill. The carpenter who constructs a temple of Truth does not employ different rules of proportion from those applied by the builder of a house of ill-fame. Why, then, should we think that the good and evil miracles referred to in the Bible have their sources in two separate and distinct arts—one sponsored by God, the other by Satan? Archaic philosophy teaches that *a common science of Magic* underlies the production of every miracle the world has ever known, whether good or bad. And like mathematics, chemistry and physics, it possesses no quality of itself, but becomes beneficent or maleficent, black or white, according to the knowledge and motives of the men who practice it.

The wiseacres say, "The age of miracles is past"; but a Master of Wisdom has said "it never existed." Power over the forces of the lower occult Universe may be acquired by the most selfish of men; the powers of the Divine Spirit belong only to the pure in heart. While indicating the path of the higher evolution in man, the Theosophist warns, as did the ancients, that *Demon est Deus inversus*. The Theosophist agrees with Nebuchadnezzar that "wisdom and understanding," such as that possessed by Daniel (1:20), is "ten times better than all the magicians and astrologers [the selfish ones] that were in all his realm." In the words of H. P. Blavatsky:

> Men cannot all be Occultists, but they can all be Theosophists. Many who have never heard of the Society are Theosophists without knowing it themselves; for the essence of Theosophy is the perfect harmonizing of the divine with the human in man, the adjustment of his god-like qualities and aspirations, and their sway over the terrestrial or animal passions in him. Kindness, absence of every ill feeling or selfishness, charity, good will to all beings, and perfect justice to others as to one's self, are its chief features.

Every human being, according to Theosophy, has the germ of all the powers attributed to Moses, Jesus, and Buddha. The difference lies solely in the fact that men in general—that is to say, the "multitudes," ourselves—have not developed what they possess the

germ of, while certain outstanding individuals, the Initiates, have gone through the training and experience which have caused all the unseen human powers to develop in them, and conferred gifts that look god-like to their struggling brothers below. All that the Christ may do is natural to the perfected man. "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do." (John 14: 12.) If these powers and "greater works" are not at once revealed to us, what can it mean but that perhaps we are still "children in understanding," to use St. Paul's phrase, that we believe not in the Father *within* (the Christ or Higher Self in each man) and its powers, and that the race is as yet selfish in the extreme and still living for the present and the transitory? As H. P. Blavatsky said: "The trinity of Nature is the lock of Magic, the trinity of man the key that fits it."

(*To be concluded.*)

"THE PSYCHOLOGY OF RELIGION"

At the beginning of the twentieth century the psychology of religion suddenly became a centre of interest to the general reader. This was almost entirely due to the genius of one man, William James, whose Gifford Lectures, *The Varieties of Religious Experience,* startled and excited a public which extended far beyond theological circles. Not only were they brilliantly and amusingly written, in a style far removed from the dry technicalities of formal psychology, but they were also highly original and provocative, at once challenging to orthodoxy and sympathetic to religion.

The student of the psychology of religion is, as things stand today, in the very difficult position that there is no one psychological theory, still less any one psychological text-book, to which he can turn with any assurance that it contains even a minimum of accepted opinions. He must in fact become a psychologist himself, and make his own choice between the views set out with so much conviction and so few common principles, before he can begin the process of applying his psychological knowledge to the elucidation of religious practice and belief. This involves the necessary consequence that it is quite impossible to study the psychology of religion by reading books directly upon that subject and no others.

—L. W. GRENSTED

WHAT IS MAGIC?

MAGIC is as old as man. It is as impossible to name the time when it sprang into existence as to indicate on what day the first man himself was born. Formerly, magic was a universal science, entirely in the hands of the sacerdotal savant. Though the focus was jealously guarded in the sanctuaries, its rays illuminated the whole of mankind. The Chaldeans, whom Cicero counts among the oldest magicians, placed the basis of all magic in the inner powers of man's soul, and by the discernment of magic properties in plants, minerals, and animals. By the aid of these they performed the most wonderful "miracles." Magic, with them, was synonymous with religion and science.

Chaldean Magic, the science of Moses and other learned thaumaturgists, was wholly based on an extensive knowledge of the various and now forgotten branches of natural science. Thoroughly acquainted with all the resources of the vegetable, animal and mineral kingdoms, experts in occult chemistry and physics, psychologists as well as physiologists, why wonder that the graduates or adepts instructed in the mysterious sanctuaries of the temples, could perform wonders, which even in our days of enlightenment would appear supernatural? It is an insult to human nature to brand magic and the occult science with the name of imposture. To believe that for so many thousands of years, one-half of mankind practiced deception and fraud on the other half, is equivalent to saying that the human race was composed only of knaves and incurable idiots. Where is the country in which magic was not practiced? At what age was it wholly forgotten? The ancients knew more concerning certain sciences than our modern savants have yet discovered.

Magic was considered a divine science which led to a participation in the attributes of Divinity itself. "It unveils the operations of nature," says Philo Judaeus, "and leads to the contemplation of celestial powers." In later periods its abuse and degeneration into

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NOTE.—A student's Collation from the writings of H. P. Blavatsky.

sorcery made it an object of general abhorrence. Moses was indebted for his knowledge to the mother of the Egyptian princess, Thermuthis, who saved him from the waters of the Nile. The wife of Pharoah, Batria, was an initiate herself, and the Jews owe to her the possession of their prophet, "learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians, and mighty in words and deeds." (Acts, 7. 22.) Justin Martyr, giving as his authority Trogus Pompeius, shows Joseph as having acquired the great knowledge in magical arts with the high priests of Egypt. (Justin xxxvi, 2.) Magic in all ancient times had been considered as divine science, wisdom, and the knowledge of God. The healing art in the temples of Aesculapius, and at the shrines of Egypt and the East, had always been magical.

The Aztecs appeared in more than one way to have resembled the ancient Egyptians in civilization and refinement. Among both peoples magic or the arcane natural philosophy was cultivated to the highest degree. Add to this that Greece, the "later cradle of the arts and sciences," and India, cradle of religions, were and still are devoted to its study and practice—and who shall venture to discredit its dignity as a study, and its profundity as a science?

With the Hindus it was and is more esoteric, if possible, than it was even among the Egyptian priests. So sacred was it deemed that its existence was only half admitted, and it was only practiced in public emergencies . . . The Egyptian Hierophant, notwithstanding the practice of a stern and pure morality, could not be compared for one moment with the ascetical Gymnosophists, either in holiness of life or miraculous powers developed in them by the supernatural adjuration of everything earthly. By those who knew them well they were held in still greater reverence than the magians of Chaldea. . . . To these men no secret power of either plant or mineral was unknown. They had fathomed nature to its depths, while psychology and physiology were to them open books, and the result was that science or *machagiotia* that is now termed, so superciliously, *magic*.

The thaumaturgists of all periods, schools, and countries, produced their wonders, because they were perfectly familiar with the imponderable—in their effects—but otherwise perfectly tangible waves of the astral light. They controlled the currents by guiding them with their will-power. The wonders were both of physical and psychological character; the former embracing effects produced upon material objects, the latter the mental phenomena of Mesmer and his successors . . . Mesmerism is the most important branch of

magic; and its phenomena are the effects of the universal agent which underlies all magic and has produced at all ages the so-called miracles.

The ancients called it *Chaos;* Plato and the Pythagoreans named it *the Soul of the World.* According to the Hindus, the Deity in the shape of Aether pervades all things. It is the invisible, but, as we have said before, too tangible Fluid. Among other names this universal Proteus . . . was termed by the theurgists "the living fire," the "Spirit of Light," and *Magnes* . . . The word *Magh, magus,* is derived from the Sanskrit *Mahaji,* the *great* or *wise* (the anointed by the divine wisdom) . . . The various cosmogonies show that the Archæal Universal Soul was held by every nation as the "mind" of the Demiurgic Creator, the *Sophia* of the Gnostics, or *the Holy Ghost as a female principle.* As the Magi derived their name from it, so the Magnesian stone or Magnet was called in their honor, for they were the first to discover its wonderful properties. . . . the representatives of "exact science" are unable to either explain or even offer us anything like a reasonable hypothesis for the undeniable mysterious potency contained in the simple magnet. We begin to have daily proofs that these potencies underlie the theurgic mysteries, and therefore might perhaps explain the occult faculties possessed by ancient and modern thaumaturgists as well as a good many of their most astonishing achievements.

Nothing can be easier accounted for than the highest possibility of magic. By the radiant light of the universal magnetic ocean, whose electric waves bind the cosmos together, and in their ceaseless motion penetrate every atom and molecule of the boundless creation, the disciples of mesmerism . . . intuitionally perceive the alpha and omega of the great mystery. Alone the student of this agent, which is the divine breath, can unlock the secrets of psychology and physiology, of cosmical and spiritual phenomena. "Magic," says Psellus, "formed the last part of the sacerdotal science." It is firmly and solely based on the mysterious affinities existing between organic and inorganic bodies, the visible productions of the four kingdoms, and the invisible powers of the universe. That which science calls gravitation, the ancients and the mediaeval hermetists called magnetism, attraction, affinity . . . a thorough familiarity with the occult faculties of everything existing in nature, visible as well as invisible; their mutual relations, attractions, and repulsions; the cause of these, traced to the *spiritual* principle which pervades and ani-

mates all things; the ability to furnish the best conditions for this principle to manifest itself, in other words, a profound and exhaustive knowledge of natural law—this *was* and *is* the basis of magic. Withal, magic is not something *supernatural.*

White, or "Beneficent Magic," so-called, is *divine* magic, devoid of selfishness, love of power, or ambition, of lucre, and bent only on doing good to the world in general, and one's neighbor in particular. The smallest attempt to use one's abnormal powers for the gratification of self, makes of these powers sorcery or black magic. Arcane knowledge misapplied, is sorcery; beneficently used, true magic, or WISDOM.

To sum up all in a few words, MAGIC is spiritual WISDOM; nature, the material ally, pupil and servant of the magician. One common vital principle pervades all things, and this is controllable by the perfected human will. The adept can stimulate the movements of the natural forces in plants and animals in a preternatural degree. Such experiments are not obstructions of nature, but quickenings; the conditions of intenser vital action are given.

The adept can control the sensations and alter the conditions of the physical and astral bodies of other persons not adepts; he can also govern and employ, as he chooses, the spirits of the elements. He cannot control the immortal spirit of any human being, living or dead, for all such spirits are alike sparks of the Divine Essence, and not subject to any foreign domination.

IAMBLICUS ON MAGIC

We declare that the most perfect and dominant essences that are the causes of the celebrations in the matter of sacrifices, are closely united with the demiurgic and supreme powers. Hence, because they comprehend in themselves all the active essences, however many they are, we say that all the creative forces whatever they are, act together in concert as one; and that from them all in common, a beneficial influence goes forth into the whole phenomenal world . . . to households and to every individual with an ungrudging willingness: one love (attraction) connecting all and creating this bond by an arcane communion.

—A. WILDER: *Iamblichos: On the Mysteries*

ON FIRST ACQUAINTANCE— "THE SECRET DOCTRINE"

XIV

> Assuming that inner existence, such as that of the human mind, is a new dimension, not a geometrical but a metaphysical dimension . . . having reduced the geometrical extension of the atoms to nothing, Leibnitz endowed them with an infinite extension in the direction of their metaphysical dimension. After having lost sight of them in the world of space, the mind has, as it were, to dive into a metaphysical world to find and grasp the real essence of what appears in space merely as a mathematical point. . . . As a cone stands on its point, or a perpendicular straight line cuts a horizontal plane only in one mathematical point, but may extend infinitely in height and depth, so the essences *of things real* have only a punctual existence in this physical world of space; but have an infinite depth of inner life in the metaphysical world of thought.
>
> —*The Secret Doctrine*

IF a major task of Theosophical endeavor is the amelioration of pointless confusion in man's inner world, it becomes easy to see why Theosophy might be mistaken for Quietism—in the same sense that people dedicated to the manipulation of "things" tend to suspect the usefulness of intellectual endeavor. In fact, people can often admit the "power" of ideas long before insight becomes a guiding factor in daily life. One might say that our domination by form and body renders our intellectual insights inactive.

However, if insight can rule our deeds, although fleetingly, we may begin to have a base of first-hand experience by which to convince ourselves, and thus strengthen the Will. We establish a ground for comparison between the inner-directed life and the outer-directed, beginning to see that men's language, their deeds, or even their form and body are corruscated after-effects of inner life. Thus the idea that "every physical point is but the phenomenal expression of the noumenal, a metaphysical point," might be applied to our objective life, as compared to its subjective counterpart.

If we begin to relate our life to others as if we were a particular expression of Mind in communion with another expression of Mind, and ignore the physical form with its personality, then we see an ex-

traordinary beauty in humans of quite ordinary form and personality. And after all, it may be that we are not here to convince others of our brilliance but to convince them of *their own*. The more another admires or criticizes us, the more difficult it is for him to look within. Yet those qualities shining *through* the physical life of another can show brotherhood an actuality. And here is a base for a sort of admiration that could transcend personal preoccupations. We might, for instance, see the outer garment of that inner cohesiveness or *esprit de corps* of people who have freely chosen a *common work*.

It may be the sense of a Big Task rather than the big "I" that is the difference between those who are impressive as persons and those who cross our path only to give us a "sense of the Movement" and never a sense of the person or the Personality. We might say that such souls are so absorbed in an effort to keep the Movement alive and vital as a mundane door into the philosophy that there is less time left for the idiosyncracies of a personal life. To be "effective" in mental reform, we must stretch our life into the lives of others so that a cycle greater than the body can span is traveled. Thus we might say that the spread of philosophical ideas is so revolutionary that most reformers have no stomach for it, for their wish to *see results* overcomes the permanence of their work.

In seeing oneself not as a thing-among-things or even a soul-among-souls, but as a *primary oneness* which is oneself and everything we perceive, we can more easily cease trying to accomplish some specific goal, but will carry on a Work because of its intrinsic merit, because of the non-specific results which blossom with each day. H.P.B. gives us a glimpse of the grandeur and intrinsic merit of such work when she quotes (*S.D.* I, 640) from Hegel's *Philosophy of History*:

> The history of the World begins with its general aim; the realization of the Idea of Spirit—only in an *implicit* form, that is, as Nature; a hidden, most profoundly unconscious instinct, and the whole process of History . . . is directed to rendering this unconscious impulse a conscious one. Thus appearing in the form of merely natural existence, natural will—that which has been called the subjective side—physical craving, instinct, passion, private interest, as also opinion and subjective conception —spontaneously present themselves at the very commencement. *This vast congeries of volitions, interests and activities constitute instruments and means of the* WORLD SPIRIT *for attaining its object;* bringing it to consciousness and realising it. And this

> aim is none other than finding itself—coming to itself—and contemplating itself in concrete actuality. But that those manifestations of vitality on the part of individuals and peoples, in which they seek and satisfy their own purposes, are at the same time *the means and instruments of a higher power, of a higher and broader purpose of which they know nothing*—which they realise unconsciously—might be made a matter of question; rather has been questioned . . . on this point I announced my view at the very outset, and asserted our hypothesis . . . and our belief *that Reason governs the World and has consequently governed its history*. In relation to this independently universal and substantial existence—all else is subordinate, subservient to it, and the means for its development.

To think of the body as an instrument for the evolution of consciousness throughout the world, as if the world were One Soul, may gradually protect us from the false aim of seeking personal salvation or progress. In a beautiful passage presaging Hegel's quotation from another point of view, Plotinus says:

> Now are we to hold similarly that your soul and mine and all are one, and that the same thing is true of the universe, the soul in all the several forms of life being one soul, not parcelled out in separate items, but an omnipresent identity?
>
> If the soul in me is a unity, why need that in the universe be otherwise. . . . And if that, too, is one soul, and yours and mine belong to it, then yours and mine must also be one. . . .
>
> But this is simply saying that there is one identical soul dispersed among many bodies, and that, preceding this, there is yet another not thus dispersed, the source of the soul in dispersion which may be thought of as a widely repeated image of the soul in unity—much as a multitude of seals bear the impression of one ring. (*Enneads*, Mackenna translation, p. 364.)

We can see a similarity here between Plotinus' "dispersed" soul and Kama Manas. The undispersed prototype might be compared to Higher Manas.

The power of universal ideas to bring us "into line" or gradually attune us to our higher prototype becomes more obvious when one considers such corollaries; and too, there might be an analogy for both the power and the paradox which students experience from a regular inspection of *The Secret Doctrine*. The power is in attunement to the part of us that transcends the personality, and the paradox may be precisely that it is an attunement and not an analytical, step-by-step process. We might say that this power comes only

gradually, and we cannot say specifically what occurred but only feel as a general drift of events in our life which we, as subjective first-hand experiencers, recognize as connected with our study of *The Secret Doctrine*; yet how does one connect the drift of a congeries of events with an abstract inspection and make this communicable to another?

With mathematics or golf or chess, the demonstration is in the practice; but the demonstration of the *S.D.* is in life itself. You might say that the results of *S.D.* work flow into life and are vehicled by all the specific things that we do. If this is so, we may suspect how frighteningly easy it would be to have no sense of progress at all; for with our normal modes of consciousness we think of progress as demonstrable rather than catalytic, *i.e.,* the analytical brain likes to have a set of specifics which it can wave like flags, to proclaim accomplishment. A sense of progress, by any usual standard, would not be applicable to what occurs between a student and *The Secret Doctrine*. In fact, we might even say that it is not a "student" relationship, for he does not learn but becomes attuned. Perhaps the student is building a new body in which to be alive.

"CREATIVE PHANTASY"

Moral Imagination, or creative phantasy, plays as decisive a part in a businessman's dream as it does in a sculptor's struggle to fashion from the unyielding substance, however inadequately, the image of an unattainable ideal. Yet in our age it is precisely this most precious of all divine gifts which is in peril. Exposed to an abundance of obvious dangers, modern man is likely to lose sight of the greatest of them: the threat to his humanity. His only chance lies in self-knowledge and in a determined fight for the preservation of his true self. No philosophical doctrine or abstract treatise can give man real self-knowledge.

—FRANZ E. WINKLER

YOUTH FORUM

It has sometimes happened that intelligent people, after engaging in a certain amount of study, have turned away from Theosophy; and not always because they disagree with its tenets—perhaps simply because of the fact that "it" seems to be a System; while life, they feel, is far too vast, ambiguous, irrational—too "real"—to allow any logical structuring of process. How can this charge against Theosophy be answered?

The question seems to this student a highly urgent one, possible answers highly elusive. Of course, if one wished to get past the dilemma smoothly and quickly, he might assert that Theosophy makes no claim to completeness, and that, as H.P.B. somewhere puts it, a hundred such volumes as *The Secret Doctrine* would not contain all the Wisdom Religion. Yet Theosophy does claim comprehensiveness in outline at least—completeness as a "key" to truth; and anyway, one can hardly avoid calling it a system. So the question remains.

It may be that the poet, Wallace Stevens, gives us implications of an answer when he exclaims, "Oh! Blessed rage for order, pale Ramon. . . ." For although he is speaking of art, his words apply equally to systems of philosophy—the compelling urge to find order in the universe, to establish relations, to give mankind a home. And Stevens suggests that there is even something blessed about this instinct, a fact which, if true, may be taken to imply that there is indeed an underlying order which man strives to comprehend just as naturally as a flower in the shade turns as it seeks the sun. Yes, it may be so; yet perhaps not necessarily so; or even if it is so, perhaps that order is too subtly implicit in the infinitudes of existence to be known in intellectual terms.

Perhaps—to continue a while to twist and turn upon the page in the hope of finding an answer—quite arbitrarily we might make up some stickily complex phrase like "non-contingent philosophic action"; and then throw it into the middle of the discussion, and maybe in this way catch a few hints for an answer. In a sense this phrase

suggests nothing more than that we should apply our philosophic ideas to life-situations—in short, that we should act. Too often people are so non-physical in their approach to living that they help no one, see no one, just stand and think instead of acting. The phrase, then, implies that if we had a greater feeling of personal, practical identification with our metaphysical ideas—we might find that Theosophy is not so very far removed from the vibrant texture of life. "All is Life," declares Theosophy, and thus even the most illusory of forms has a relative reality, just as we ourselves, the very personalities we take ourselves to be, have a relative reality. We seem, therefore, to be able to pronounce contradictory verdicts about life, yet in both cases remain true to Theosophical philosophy. We can say with the preacher, "All is vanity," and then with equal conviction say, "All is soul and spirit ever evolving under the rule of Law." Surely any philosophy which allows for both these statements cannot be very far removed from the fabric of life, which often appears to us simply as a sum of irreconcilables, a mesh of ambiguities.

But this phrase we've coined seems most of all to imply that Theosophy, or any philosophy, is not in itself complete (even if those other hundred volumes were available to us), that in fact *we* are required, we and our actions, before it can find completion. For the essence of philosophy is not in its explanations, but in the impetus it gives.

All these considerations may indicate that our fine phrase, "non-contingent philosophic action," is really a synonym for "art," in a deep sense of that term. One is inclined to say this especially when considering the Theosophical exhortation to raise and transform physical life; most overtly it is the artists who effect this transformation (though if we are fully to accept this statement, we must consider as an artist anyone who "transforms life" in a positive way). In a sense, then, it may be that a slender book of poems (if they are great poems) represents a fulfillment of that heavy philosophical work next to which it stands on our shelf. This is not to say that philosophy is not necessary—it is essential, and especially so in this period when artists are being suffocated by a feeling of meaninglessness, but, well, even *The Secret Doctrine* is based on a poem! Besides, when one comes to the end of this life, what is it that he is likely to remember as representing its essence? Surely not some easily verbalized moral, such as one finds at the ends of fables, nor yet

some Aristotelian postulate—rather, a few deeply personal memories, certain moments in our life that spoke to us like hints of portents, even if we can think of no apparent reason that they should have affected us that way. As one poet puts it (and as only a poet could):

> For all the history of grief
> An empty doorway and a maple leaf.

Such memories seem emblematic of a certain quality of existence, but surely, at such a time as the approach of death, no verbalizations, no words, unless perhaps just, "I've loved you all—all of you . . ."

No, Theosophy does not seem complete in book form, nor even when introduced into our consciousness in the form of conceptions and opinions. It must be translated through action into life—so that life in turn may be transformed into art.

Living Art

I hope we will come to an understanding that the material used is only incidental, that there is artist in every man; and that to him the possibility of development and of expression and the happiness of creation is as much a right and as much a duty to himself, as to any of those who work in the especially ticketed ways.

The great revolution in the world which is to equalize opportunity, bring peace and freedom, must be a spiritual revolution. A new *will* must come. This *will* is a very personal thing in each one. Our education has led away from the realization that the mystery of nature is in each man. When we are wiser we will not assume to mould ourselves, but will make our ignorance stand aside—hands off—and we will watch our own development. We will learn from ourselves. This habit of conducting nature is a bad one.

I am certain that we do deal in an unconscious way with another dimension than the well-known three. It does not matter much to me now if it is the fourth dimension or what its number is, but I know that deep in us there is always a grasp of proportions which exist over and through the obvious three, and it is by this power of super-proportioning that we reach the inner meaning of things.

—Robert Henri

on the lookout

More on Religion and the Schools

Since the Supreme Court decision of June 17, 1963, which pronounced unlawful prayer and Bible reading in the public schools, more than a hundred bills have been proposed to render the high court's decision invalid by way of a new amendment to the Constitution of the United States. On Feb. 20 (1964), Representative Frank J. Becker, of New York, introduced a "discharge petition" to force Bible and prayer discussion out of the hands of a senate judiciary committee and bring a vote.

Rep. Becker, emerging as spokesman for the lobbyists who planned to "get the Bible back in the schools," had apparently been under the impression that all the major church groups would enthusiastically endorse his efforts. Such, however, was not the case. Leaders of the National Council of Churches and of the Synagogue Council of America, after prolonged discussion within their groups, opposed any attempts to overrule the Supreme Court.

All is not Gold that Gliters

While the Becker proposal, which would in effect amend the First Amendment—first article of the Bill of Rights—has many vociferous supporters, there are indications that informed Christians are beginning to recognize that religion can never be made "sacred" through legislation or be properly presented by indoctrination. Determined opposition to the Becker amendment is recorded in such journals as the *Christian Century* and the *Unitarian Register*. In Theosophical terms, discussions of the issues involved in the Supreme Court decision and in subsequent proposals to countermand it afford a much-needed opportunity for clarification of the means by which a nonsectarian government can manage sectarian issues. At the outset, it must be noted that the ruling which, on June 17, 1963, outlawed those religious exercises which were clearly identifiable as partisan indoctrination did not in any way imply that public education could *not* concern itself with the fundamental area of religious inquiry and affirmation. An education which leaves un-

touched the entire region of transcendental thought is an education which has nothing important to say about the meaning of life. And there is, clearly, a relationship between a fundamental "religious affirmation" and the philosophy upon which the United States Constitution was based.

A Legitimate Christian Point

There is no doubt that Jesus of Nazareth affirmed that respect for higher authority than the state was essential to human fulfillment. The "kingdom of heaven" is beyond any promises of reward or threats of punishment used by the state to regulate human behavior. The U.S. Bill of Rights tacitly assumes that the majority unites, not to rule the minority in such matters, but to guarantee the integrity of individual conscience—to guarantee that, in some respects at least, each man is allowed allegiance to his own conscience and, in Emerson's words, to speak "the utmost syllable of his conviction." In this sense, there may be no doubt that the men referred to as "the Founding Fathers" did place emphasis on a higher order of values than any the state could provide—a view confirmed by the guarantees of the Bill of Rights—but this sort of awareness is possible only to those who view religion in a nonsectarian fashion.

A Problem for the Schools

An article in the November, 1963, *Harvard Law Review,* by Louis H. Pollock, professor of Law at Yale, summarizes the history of Supreme Court decisions regarding sectarian intrusions in the schools. Endorsing the wisdom of the court, Prof. Pollock suggests the need of continuing analysis. He believes that teachers and school administrators can now acquaint themselves with constitutional history in this regard, in the interests of clarity, and that "to the extent that attention would thereby be directed to the schoolroom and its position of unique responsibility in American society, the prayer cases could serve not merely to free the schools of a function they cannot justify, but to encourage them in those activities which only they can perform." Prof. Pollock continues:

> It may well be that most American schools do very little to enlarge student awareness of the role of religion in a democratic society. To the extent that this is so, it is a salient item in a more general indictment—that American public schools do a woefully poor job of fostering citizen understanding of the nature of American freedoms and of the institutions charged with protecting those freedoms. Classroom study of the *Engel* and *Schempp*

cases [outlawing prayer and ritual Bible reading] might be an excellent beginning point for such understanding. Many lessons might emerge from such a study. One would be a sense of the sanctity of religion. Another would be a sense of the high place of nonconformity. Still another would be a sense of the subtlety of the responsibilities Americans impose upon their legislatures and their courts. But perhaps the final lesson would be a recognition that these institutions are, in the last analysis, only secondary architects of the American experience. As Justice Frankfurter observed in *McCollum,* "The public school is at once the symbol of our democracy and the most pervasive means for promoting our common destiny."

A State Board Bulletin

Throughout the United States aroused—though not necessarily informed—religionists have bombarded school officials with phone calls and letters, sometimes requesting defiance of the Court ruling. Among the many attempts on the part of state agencies to explain the meaning of the high court's ruling is the following statement, issued by the California State Board of Education. This communication, circulated to all local school boards, reads in part:

> Some are confused as to whether or not the Bible can be referred to in any way and whether any mention of religion or churches is allowable in the classroom. That there is no prohibition against such mention seems obvious from a reading of the Supreme Court decision and the comments made by four of the justices who have written concurrences.
>
> The Justices' opinions in this case recognize the importance of religion and reflect a great respect for it. They are men who would not willingly weaken religion in any way nor substitute a godless philosophy for it.
>
> The California Attorney General's opinion given to the State Superintendent of Public Instruction is in this same spirit. He says, "Those constitutional and statutory provisions that provide 'no sectarian or denominational doctrine' shall be 'taught or instruction thereon be permitted directly or indirectly in any of the common schools of this state' apply equally to all forms of religious belief irrespective of whether they embody a belief in the existence of God. Thus the 'teaching of' atheism or agnosticism in the public schools is prohibited if by the words 'teaching of' it is meant the teaching of doctrine with a view toward obtaining an acceptance as to the truth of that doctrine. . . ." He goes on to say that there are penalties in the State *Education Code* which would apply to "the making of statements, in such schools and colleges, which advocate, tend to advocate, or im-

plant in pupils' minds a preference for, atheism or agnosticism or which reflect unfavorably upon any particular religion, upon all religions or upon any religious creed."

"Teaching About Religion"

The State bulletin continues:

> The State Board of Education believes that these matters need to be brought to the attention of parents as well as to school officials. While religious worship services are not to be held in the schools nor is any religious group to be given the right to promote its own beliefs over another, neither is the irreligious person given the right to promote his particular point of view. Christian parents, therefore, are protected by law against any attempt to destroy or weaken their children's faith in their particular church. The religious faith of the majority is protected as well as the freedom of the minority.
>
> Our schools should have no hesitancy in teaching about religion. We urge our teachers to make clear the contributions of religion to our civilization, through history, art and ethics. We want the children to be aware of the spiritual principles and the faith which undergird our way of life. We are confident that our teachers are competent to differentiate between teaching about religion and conducting a compulsory worship service. This point of view, we believe, is in accordance with the tradition handed down by our fathers and reaffirmed by the United States Supreme Court.

Alternative Proposals for Teaching Religion

Some of the educators who understand and uphold the Supreme Court ruling against sectarian intrusion in the schools are working on a nonsectarian introduction to transcendental values. Prof. Theodore Brameld, of Boston University, has listed the pros and cons in a succinct fashion, providing for continuing discussion. Dr. Brameld suggests five approaches to the place of religious education in the public schools. First and most familiar is belief in indoctrination in the Christian tradition. This approach, manifestly, "fails to meet the criteria of democratic teaching" implied or specified in a cluster of propositions. Proponents of indoctrination simply do not see the ethical and spiritual reasons for maintaining separation between church and state.

The second approach, that of "released time" for education in religion, recognizes something of the necessity for church-state separation, but presses to *separate the children,* also. Dr. Brameld comments:

> "Released time" arranges children into separate little parades and marches them off to their respective synagogues and churches to receive the respective version of the one true religious doctrine. Meanwhile, children who don't happen to fit into any one of the parades are also divided from the rest if only by being left out.

The third approach would teach "moral and spiritual values" in a purely secular fashion, but here the obvious drawback is another kind of divisiveness. Dr. Brameld continues:

> It creates a distinct dualism between the "moral and spiritual values" that the public school legitimizes and those that it does not. Through the channels of their homes and churches, children oftener than not become aware of the "spiritual"' in a theistic sense as well as of the "moral" in a secular sense. Yet no deliberate attempt is made to consider whether and how the two types of values might be compared and then carefully appraised.

A fourth approach requires the teacher to instruct about religion in purely "objective" terms—giving attention to every religious outlook and providing them equal shares of attention. Dr. Brameld observes:

> In asking teachers to exclude all consideration of their own religious preferences, it asks them to act in a way that contradicts the very psychology of learning and teaching that advocates of this plan for the religious area themselves constantly urge in studying the other areas. I refer, of course, to the functional psychology that regards the learning-teaching process as an organismic whole.

The fifth alternative is to eliminate carefully any and all references to religion (and, of course, no Bible reading or prayers), and to avoid teaching anything which could be considered to fit under the heading "moral values." Dr. Brameld says:

> The main trouble with the fifth alternative is that, though theoretically consistent, it creates an even more glaring dichotomy between education and life than do the preceding alternatives. By denying students opportunity to learn what they can of one of the most ubiquitous of all institutions fashioned by man, it therefore indoctrinates largely by default. This is, by constricting curriculum study to institutions other than religious ones, it tends to produce a one-sided view of civilization exactly as sectarian indoctrination does in the opposite way.

Will a sixth alternative emerge as we consider the needs of education for the coming age? Dr. Brameld believes such an alternative lies in the application of the principle of "defensible partiality," wherein school children should be able to hear the religious convic-

tions of men in their communities who express a wide variety of beliefs.

Fear of Controversy

Such proposals as those by Dr. Brameld—and many are being considered as the present "great debate" continues—admittedly run the risk of controversy. It will be said that the nonsectarian approach to religion requires so much background and wisdom that most communities are not ready for the project. The time seems to have come, however, when such endeavors should be encouraged, to labor to overcome the assumption that what is difficult is impossible, and to build faith in the far-reaching results of every effort to transcend bigoted partisanship. Dr. Brameld also speaks to this point:

> Does not the project, especially if and as it spreads across the field of general education, threaten to undermine the faiths of millions of young Americans? Is it not better, then, to leave well enough alone?
>
> My reply is that we do not now leave well enough alone. The issue of religious education can no longer be side-stepped even were this thought to be desirable. I have reviewed five current ways of dealing with the issue—all of them supported by vocal advocates, none of them satisfactory.

Responsibility of the Educator

> I gladly concede, however, that the sixth plan submitted for consideration would probably affect the religious attitudes of a great many students. But a myriad of influences already affect them. As in the case of other controversial issues—sex education is one—most young Americans are now being exposed, one way or another, to a variety of views. Thus the germane question is not whether they shall be exposed at all, but in what ways and under whose auspices.
>
> Under the rightful auspices of the public school, some young people will of course reject their earlier religious beliefs, others will modify them, still others will find them re-confirmed and deepened. This is the risk created by any kind of effective education. It is a risk worth taking. (*Manas,* April 15.)

The aim of such an approach to the study of religion is summarized in Herbert Fingarette's *The Self in Transformation*:

> It is the special fate of modern man that he has a "choice" of spiritual visions. The paradox is that although each requires complete commitment for complete validity, we can today generate a context in which we see that no one of them is the sole vision. . . .

At first one lives with one vision for years before there is readiness for another. After the accumulation of experience and of acquaintance with more than one of these ways of seeing, the movement from one organizing view to another can come more rapidly. This shifting of visions is not then any the less a matter of genuine and deep commitment. It is not a sampling or tasting, not an eclecticism. For one calls upon a vision with a life, one's own, behind it.

Editorial in the "Christian Century"

A short commentary in this leading publication on the dangers and inadequacy of such proposed amendments to the Constitution as that of Rep. Becker makes the stand of liberal Christians clear:

Backers of the so-called Becker amendment seeking to restore prayer and Bible reading to the public schools claim that the amendment will "put God back into the schools." What kind of household god is this that can be taken out of and put into public schools? This argument for tampering with the First Amendment of the Constitution falls from the dead weight of its own absurdity. The God who is God cannot be "put" anywhere by law nor can he be summoned to any place by ceremonial incantations. If the supporters of Becker's bill say that what they want is for young people and children to recognize in school the presence of God, they state their case a bit better but their argument is still absurd.

Liberation of the Sectarian Mind

In our pluralistic society no prayer, however well devised, can meet the spiritual needs of some children without offending the spiritual traditions and sensitivities of other children. No Bible reading, however carefully selected, can awaken the religious consciousness of some children without brutally offending the captured minds and spirits of other children. In ruling against prayers and Bible readings in public schools the Supreme Court had to ask only one question: Are prayers and Bible readings in public schools unconstitutional? However shocked the people were when the decisions were first announced, most Americans soon concluded that the Supreme Court answered the question in the only way it can be answered: such prayers and Bible readings are unconstitutional. What most Americans evidently miss in these Supreme Court decisions is the fact that in so ruling the Supreme Court indirectly and coincidentally liberated the people from an enforced and idolatrous service of false gods. If the American people think long and soberly about the implications of the Becker amendment, most of them will conclude that they do not want the state or any of its agencies telling their children

what god to believe in. The Supreme Court decisions liberated religion; the Becker amendment would once again enslave it.

The Century's editors are not lacking in devotion to a genuine Christian tradition; clearly Jesus disparaged *public* prayer.

One Congressman's Stand

Many church organizations and editors of denominational publications have written letters against the proposed amendment, to California Congressman George E. Brown, Jr. (29th District). Among them are letters from *Baptist Message, Maryland Baptist,* General Conference of the Seventh Day Adventists, Board of Rabbis of Southern California, Executive Council of Lutheran Churches, and Union of American Hebrew Congregations. A portion of a subsequent communication from Congressman Brown to his constituents is reproduced here because it emphasizes some constitutional points which Theosophists are apt to consider important:

> This country was founded, to a large extent, by religious dissenters—part of a small minority (probably less than 5%) of the people of England who felt that the King of England and the English government had no right to interfere in the practice of religion, to establish a state church, or to prescribe a form of religious worship. Before it was possible to secure agreement among the States to the ratification of the Constitution of the United States, it was necessary to provide assurances in the Bill of Rights that the Congress of the United States would be prohibited from legislating with regard to the establishment of religion or the free exercise thereof.
>
> Today the Supreme Court is saying to us that the First Amendment means that the State shall not use its power to either help or hinder religion; that this prohibition holds whether we are 95% agreed upon our religious beliefs or only 55% agreed . . . whether the State requires 5 minutes of prayer and Bible reading or one hour per day. Once the wall that separates the State and religion is breached, then the whole wall is in danger of collapse.
>
> This protection does not depend upon any vote or election. The Bill of Rights—specifically, the First Amendment—was written by men suspicious of majorities. They were anxious to protect the rights of minorities, or dissenters, or of the unpopular position, because they were of that breed themselves. Therefore, these Constitutional protections are above the will of Congress, the President, the States, or any other unit of government.

Report of Congressional Discussion

The March 1 and April 15 issues of *Memo,* from the Washington

Office of the National Council of Churches, are devoted to reporting congressional debate and legal opinions on the issue of "Prayer and Bible" in the schools. Two paragraphs from the March 1 issue seem pertinent:

> One source of confusion about church-state relations in America has been the meaning of the word "religion" in the First Amendment: "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; . . ." Does "religion" comprehend more than a church or sect? Does it mean the same thing in both clauses? How define "respecting"? (Or is "religion" a number of persons holding a belief, or an activity based upon that belief, with some time continuum?) Must that belief be theistic? How do you define "belief?" . . .
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> The church-state problem has not been limited to the legal sphere, with its struggle for precise definitions. Another aspect of the issue has arisen out of the course of American history. "Religion" in America is not monolithic. No longer does an informally established "Protestant" ethos dominate the Nation (if it ever did). Instead, today we are confronted by the sociological and theological fact of "pluralism." Pluralism means the active competition of other thought forces with the traditional *Weltanshauung* of American Protestantism. What this comes down to in pragmatic terms is that public policy (the "state") must now take into consideration the viewpoints of several opinion-formulation blocs, rather than assume a general consensus when it acts tangentially upon, or penetrates directly into, the sphere of "religion."